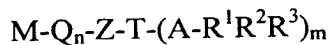


B1  
cancel

~~n is >0 and <1; and  
m is 1.~~

Please cancel Claims 2, 4 and 7-16.

17. (amended) A hydrocarbon composition comprising one or more protected functionalized chain extended anionic polymerization initiators or the formula



wherein:

M is lithium;

Q is a saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbyl group derived by incorporation of at least one conjugated diene hydrocarbons or mixtures thereof;

Z is a straight chain hydrocarbon connecting group which contains 3-25 carbon atoms;

T is oxygen;

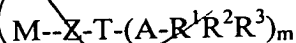
(A-R<sup>1</sup>R<sup>2</sup>R<sup>3</sup>)<sub>m</sub> is a protecting group in which A is carbon and R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, and R<sup>3</sup> are alkyl;

n is >0 and <1; and

m is 1.

Please cancel Claims 18-20.

21. (amended) The composition of Claim 20, wherein said at least one additional initiator comprises one or more non-Chain extended compounds of the formula



wherein:

M is lithium;

Q is a saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbyl group derived by incorporation of at least one conjugated diene hydrocarbons or mixtures thereof;

Z is a straight chain hydrocarbon connecting group which contains 3-25 carbon atoms;

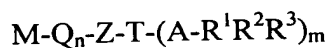
T is oxygen;

$(A-R^1R^2R^3)_m$  is a protecting group in which A is carbon and  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ , and  $R^3$  are alkyl;

n is >0 and <1; and

m is 1.

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cancel  
22. (amended) The composition of Claim 20, wherein said at least one additional initiator comprises one or more chain extended compounds of the formula



wherein:

M is lithium;

Q is a saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbyl group derived by incorporation of at least one conjugated diene hydrocarbons or mixtures thereof;

Z is a straight chain hydrocarbon connecting group which contains 3-25 carbon atoms;

T is oxygen;

$(A-R^1R^2R^3)_m$  is a protecting group in which A is carbon and  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ , and  $R^3$  are alkyl;

n is >0 and <1; and

m is 1.

Please cancel Claims 23, 24 and 26.

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27. (amended) The composition of Claim 25, wherein Q comprises isoprene.